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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 002123

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/25/2014

TAGS: PREL PGOV PHUM BM NL

SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS/ASEM: LOOKING FOR COMPROMISE AGREEMENT  
AT GYMNICHE

REF: A. (A) STATE 179237  
      1B. (B) THE HAGUE 1916

Classified By: POL Counselor Andrew Schofer for reasons 1.4 (b/d)

(C) Poloff delivered ref A message August 24 to Eric Verwaal, Head of MFA's Southeast Asia Division and Special Assistant to EU Special Envoy Hans van den Broek. Verwaal replied that the negotiations, still in progress, are aimed at reaching a conclusion that will preserve both the ASEM meeting and EU policy toward Burma, including the emphasis on human rights. Echoing his previous response (Ref B), Verwaal took note of U.S. concerns, but stated that since an EU conclusion will not be reached until the EU's September 3-4 Gymnich meeting he must remain "extremely economical" in revealing the status of negotiations or possible conclusions. He brushed off mention of the EU Parliament declaration cited in ref A, implying that it would not be an impediment to reaching a compromise solution. Verwaal also confirmed that during FM Bot's visit to Indonesia this week, Bot would discuss ASEM membership with the Indonesian leadership and, he said, ensure that Asian partners are "doing their utmost" with regard to the situation in Burma.

RUSSEL